

UNDAUNTED STEWARDSHIP

PURPOSE OF THE BRIEFING DOCUMENT:

Undaunted Stewardship Program Description and Status

ISSUES:

Background: The Undaunted Stewardship concept came from Montana's ranching and agricultural community. It was initiated to recognize the stewardship of private landowners that has resulted in many areas along the Lewis and Clark Trail remaining undeveloped and closely resembling what Lewis and Clark saw during their expedition through the state. Another aspect of Undaunted Stewardship is to develop on-the-ground projects with private landowners that will further enhance the natural resources along the trail. This program, working with private landowners, develops management plans and interpretive kiosks. It has also identified projects to showcase outstanding land stewardship practices on 12 Montana ranches in addition to a certification program which recognizes sound grazing practices. Sixteen other organizations complete the public/private partnership. Congress has been appropriating funding for the Undaunted Stewardship program, through the BLM, since April 2001.

Program Goals:

Goal 1: To demonstrate that agriculture and environmental values can be compatible.

Goal 2: To educate people (e.g., farmers, ranchers, policymakers, and other citizens) about how voluntary, incentive-based approaches can be used to sustain and enhance the environmental, social, historical, and economic values of agricultural landscapes.

Recognition: The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation recognized the Undaunted Stewardship program with the Chairman's Award for Federal Achievement in Historic Preservation. The award, presented in Annapolis, Maryland, on May 18, 2005, cited Undaunted Stewardship as a "wonderful model for similar partnerships across the Nation."

BLM role: As a member of the executive council, BLM has helped develop agreements that:

- Lay out a methodology to prioritize and select projects for funding;
- Create the means to fund projects through Montana State University (MSU) when needed;
- Encourage the use of partnerships with other organizations to leverage available funding.

MAIN DECISION OR MESSAGE:

Although Undaunted Stewardship funding comes to Montana BLM, it is essentially pass-through funding. The intent is not to use this money for projects that would traditionally be funded by regular BLM appropriations. The BLM, MSU, Montana Stockgrowers, and an advisory board jointly select projects that meet the criteria of the Undaunted Stewardship initiative, which is aimed at showcasing stewardship on private lands.

BUREAU PERSPECTIVE:

The Montana Stockgrowers Association was instrumental in obtaining the Undaunted Stewardship appropriation and serves on the executive council.

Several conservation groups are involved in the process and will offer advice concerning projects along the Missouri and other rivers and streams along the Lewis and Clark Trail.

Montana State University is providing outreach and research and science assistance for project development and implementation. It is also assisting private landowners in developing management strategies.

CONTACT:

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